USING DR. KITAKASUKABE'S BACK PAIN, ACTION MASK STOPPED HIM DEAD IN HIS TRACKS, BUT NOW HE HAS BEEN CHOSEN AS THE NEXT HOST... IT'S A DESPERATE SITUATION?!

CHAPTER 20 - THE SECRET PLAN

ACTION MASK

HIS FIST BREAKS ONLY THE MIND OF HATE.

ORIGINAL CHARACTERS: YOSHITO USUI
MANGA: DATTO NISHIWAKI
STORY: PROJECT ACTION MASK

GOU...
LISTEN TO ME.
WHAT IS IT, PAL?
IS THERE A WAY TO DEFEAT THE EMPEROR?
THERE IS ONE.
BUT... IT'S INCREDIBLY DANGEROUS.

WE SEAL THE EMPEROR INSIDE YOU.
...!
YOU MEAN, LET HIM POSSESS ME?
THAT'S...
JUST FOR A MOMENT.
YOU FIRE THE ACTION BEAM RIGHT AT YOUR OWN HEART.
BUT THAT ONE MOMENT IS WHEN WE THROW THE DICE.
ONCE YOU LEAD THE EMPEROR IN AND HE FUSES WITH YOU...
!

YES.
THE ACTION BEAM IS ONE THAT USES A STRONG WILL TO PURIFY THE HEART OF HATRED.
IN THEORY, IT'S POSSIBLE TO FIRE THE BEAM AT YOUR OWN HEART AS WELL.
AT MY OWN HEART...
CAN I REALLY DO THAT?
HOWEVER, TO FIRE THE BEAM AT YOURSELF REQUIRES TRUE COURAGE.
THE COURAGE TO REALLY FACE YOUR OWN WEAKNESSES HEAD ON, WITHOUT HATRED.
NOT MANY PEOPLE CAN DO THAT.
HOWEVER, AS YOU ARE RIGHT NOW...
THAT'S RIGHT.
YEAH... NO MATTER WHAT, I WILL NO LONGER BE TRAPPED IN ANY HATRED!

"SUPER ACTION BEAM"...?
...THIS "SUPER ACTION BEAM."
THAT'S WHY YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIRE IT...
IT'S THE NAME OF THIS BEAM.
I JUST CAME UP WITH IT.
I CAN'T HELP THAT I ONLY THOUGHT IT UP NOW.
ISN'T IT A LITTLE UNIMAGINA-TIVE FOR A FINAL ATTACK?
I WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN.
LIKE WITH MATSU-ZAKA-SAN?
BUT AREN'T YOU WORRIED THAT HE'LL ESCAPE FROM INSIDE ME?
HEH...

JUST AIM THERE...? WHAT DO WE DO IF I HIT YOU?
I'LL CAPTURE HIM ONCE HE'S INSIDE YOU.
SO YOU JUST HAVE TO AIM THERE AND FIRE THE BEAM.
NOT A PROBLEM.
I'LL BREAK AWAY RIGHT BEFORE THE BEAM HITS.
THAT'S WHY, GOU...
YOU SHOULD JUST CONCENTRATE ON FIRING THE BEAM.
THANK YOU...
...GOU.
I SEE.
GOT IT.

I UNDERSTAND MY OWN WEAKNESSES, BUT I KNOW MY OWN STRENGTHS, AS WELL.
HEY, PAL.
GOU...
IF WE'RE TOGETHER, WE CAN BECOME THE STRONGEST EVER.
AIN'T THAT RIGHT?
IT'S THE EXISTENCE OF THE PARTNER INSIDE ME.
YEAH...!
THIS IS THE FINAL BATTLE!
WE WILL DEFEAT HIM, WITH OUR OWN HANDS.

GRRR-
HOOOOAH!
RUMBLE
RAAAA-
AAAAH!!
RWOOOOOOOOOOM
!!
FLUMP
HEH
HEH...

GOU... IS SUFFER-ING OUT THERE!
THE EMPEROR'S DOWN... WHAT'S GOING ON?!
DASH
MISATO-CHAN?
...!
UGH...

LOOM...
NOW, THEN...
HAND OVER YOUR BODY!

YOU FELL FOR IT, EMPEROR!
...
HAH...
GRIN...
WHAT?
...!
A TRAP?!
SHIFF
THE MORE HIGH-AND-MIGHTY THE OPPONENT, THE EASIER THEY FALL INTO PLACE
DID YA EVEN THINK THE PLAN WOULD GO AS SMOOTHLY AS THIS, PAL?

YOU FIGURED IT OUT TOO LATE!
YOU MAY'VE BEEN HIDING AROUND AND SNEAKING IN AND OUT OF OTHERS' SHADOWS UP 'TIL NOW, BUT NOW YOU CAN'T RUN!
I'LL BEAT THAT ROTTEN CORE OF YOURS BACK INTO SHAPE!
...!
JAB
YOU CAN'T SEAL ME IN!
GETTING OUT OF HERE IS AS SIMPLE AS-!
FLAPP
HMPH
IDIOT, HAVE YOU ALREADY FORGOT-TEN?

PAL!
ZO
OM
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE!
YOU LITTLE–!
CLANK

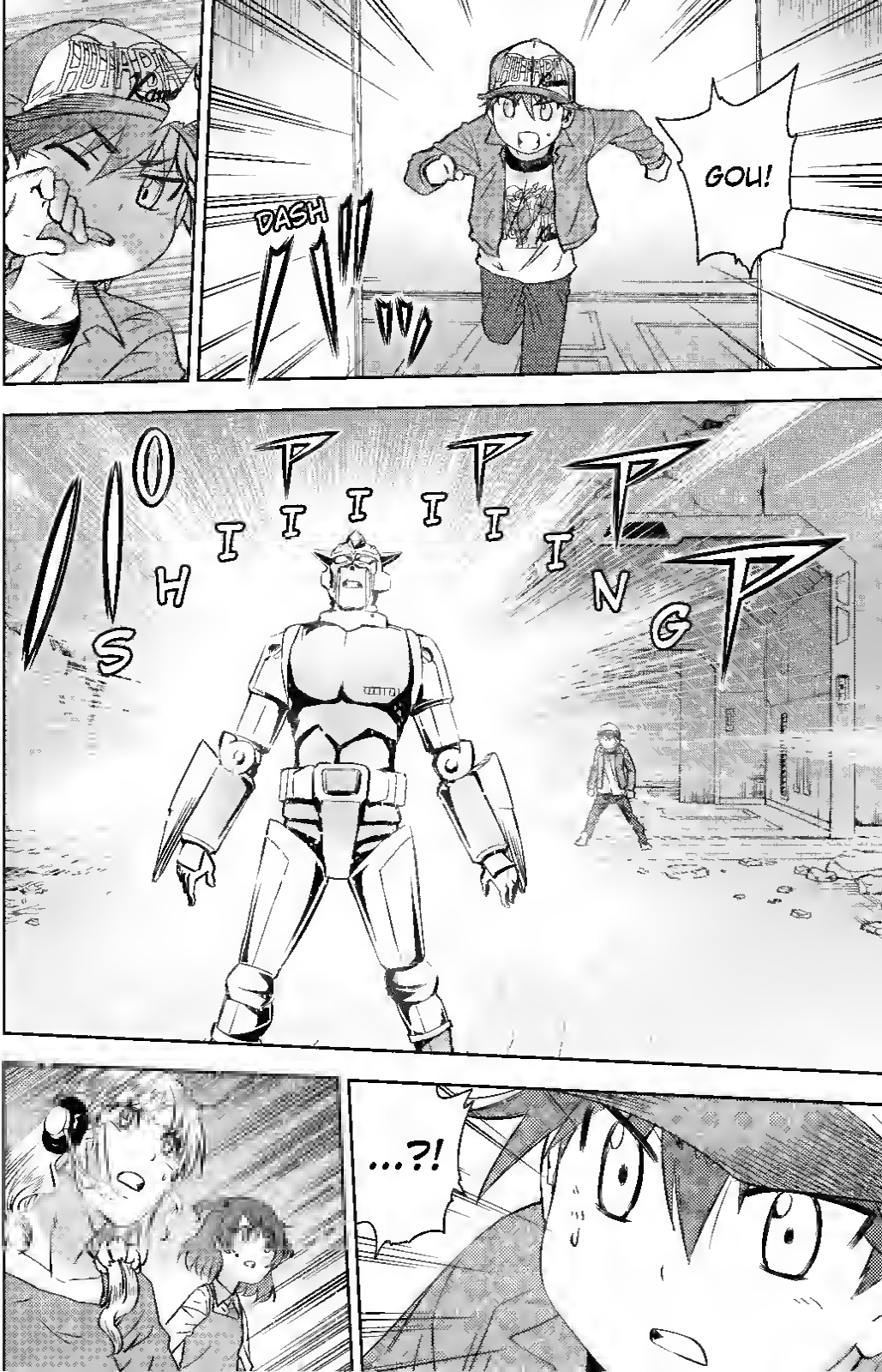
WHAT ARE YOU SCHEMING?!
CURSES!
FLAIL
FLAIL
GOU, NOW...!
THAT POSITION... NO!
W-WAIT!

LET'S GO, PAL!
WE CAN DO THIS!!
YES, GOU!
STOP IT...
STOOO-OOOOP!

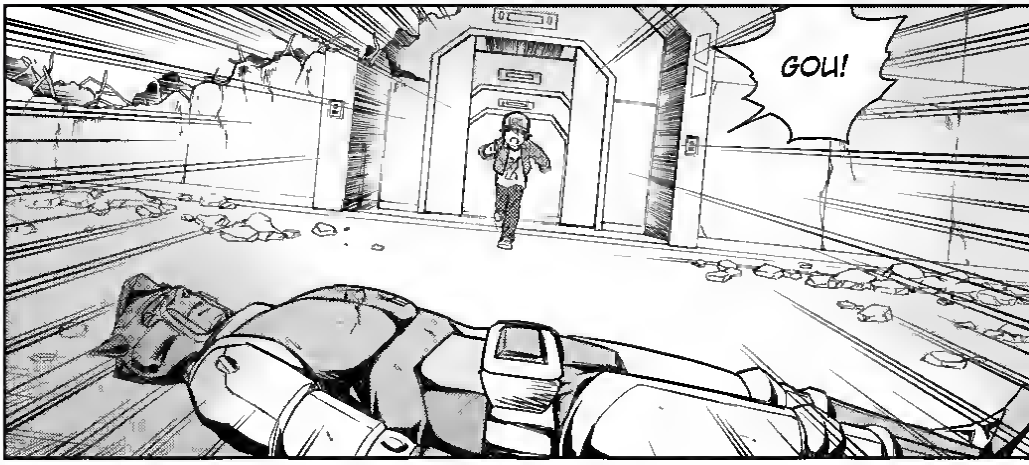
SUPER
ACTION
BEAM!!

AAAAHH!
GRAAAAH...
UNHAND ME!
YOU'LL BE VAPORIZED AS WELL!!
IF YOU'RE DESTROYED BECAUSE OF IT, THEN IT'S FINE BY ME!
...!!

BOOM


GOU!
DASH
STOPPING

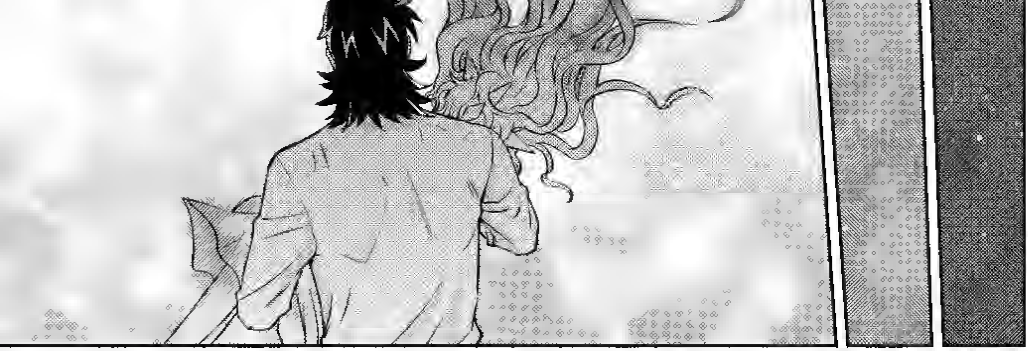
Kamen
THUD...


GOU!

IT'S...?!

ARE YOU OKAY?! GOU! GOU!!

GASP



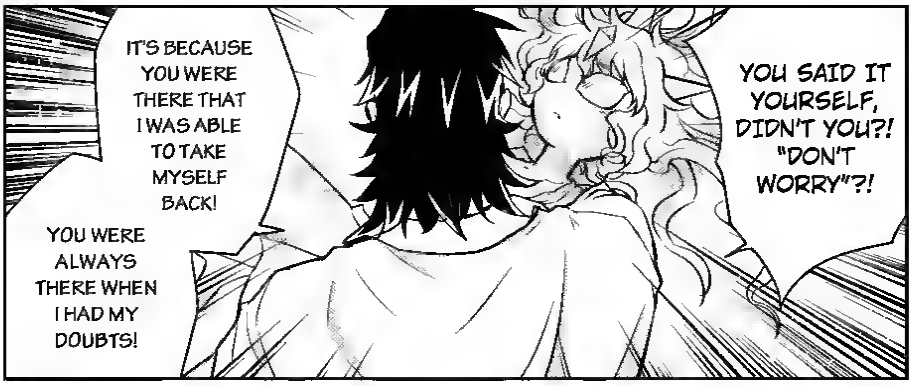
PAL...

WHY DID IT HAVE TO END LIKE THIS...?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?! HANG IN THERE!
GOU...
GASP
HEY!
WHY DIDN'T YOU DODGE THE BEAM?!
THE EMPEROR IS NO MORE.
HE'S GONE... THANKS TO YOU, GOU.
NO... DID YOU PLAN ON THIS FROM THE START...?
I'M SORRY... IF I TOLD YOU, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE FIRED, RIGHT?
THE SUPER ACTION BEAM WAS OUR FINAL CARD.
IF IT DIDN'T HIT THE EMPEROR, THEN WE WOULD'VE HAD NOTHING LEFT TO PLAY.

THIS WAS A CHANCE FOR ME TO ATONE FOR THE PAST.
NO, IT IS MY RESPONSI-BILITY.
BUT...
THAT'S NOT YOUR RESPONSI-BILITY...
I'M SO GLAD WE COULD PROTECT THIS PLANET...
HEY... STOP THAT.
PAL!
HEHEE

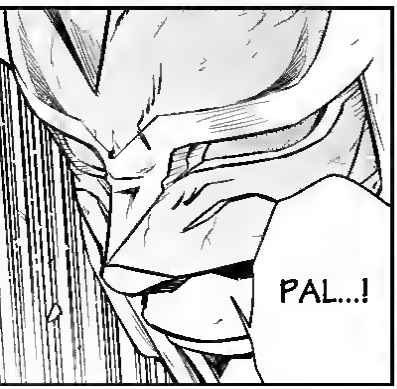
THIS IS BULL! I DIDN'T SIGN ON FOR THIS!


IT'S BECAUSE YOU WERE THERE THAT I WAS ABLE TO TAKE MYSELF BACK!
YOU WERE ALWAYS THERE WHEN I HAD MY DOUBTS!
YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, DIDN'T YOU?! "DON'T WORRY"?!

GOU!
WAKE UP, GOU!
ISN'T THAT RIGHT, PARTNER?! OPEN YOUR EYES!
YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND!

...PAL!

GOU..!


PAL...!

PAL'S GONNA DIE BECAUSE OF ME!
PAL!
PAL!

DON'T YOU DARE CRY!
GRAB
GOU!
ACTION MASK IS THE HERO WHO CUTS OFF THE HEART OF HATRED, LEAVING SMILES BEHIND ON EVERYONE'S FACES!
YOU CAN'T CRY LIKE THIS!
MISATO...

HEY...
PAL HASN'T ENTIRELY DIED YET, RIGHT?
CAN'T WE SAVE HIM?
...I DON'T KNOW.
HE DOESN'T RESPOND, NO MATTER HOW MUCH I CALL OUT FOR HIM
AND BESIDES, THIS MASK IS FALLING APART...
!
WHAT IS IT, GOU?!
THE MASK HASN'T DISAPP-EARED..
THEN... THAT MEANS THAT PAL HASN'T DISAPPEARED!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
THIS MASK ISN'T ACTUALLY A PHYSICAL OBJECT...
PAL GAVE THIS FORM TO THE POWER HE WANTED TO SHARE WITH ME!
THEN PAL'S STILL ALIVE, AND WE CAN STILL SAVE HIM!
THERE'S GOTTA BE SOME-THING...
LIKE MEDS WHEN HE'S HURT, OR FOOD TO BOOST HIS SPIRITS?
BOOST HIS SPIRITS...
THAT'S... THAT'S IT!
WHOA?!
カ//レ//ツ//

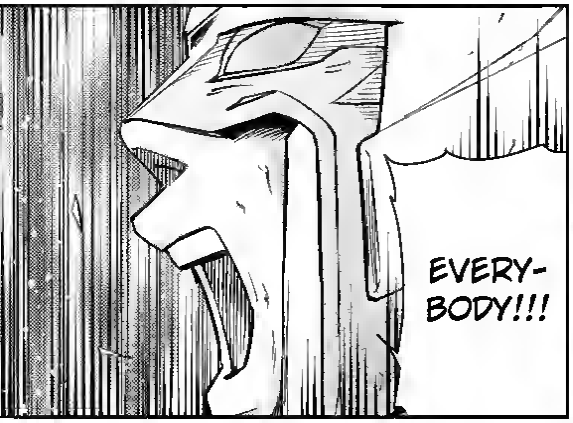
I GOT IT, MISATO!
IT'S JUST LIKE HOW HEARTS FILLED WITH HATE ARE THE ENERGY SOURCE OF THE EMPEROR AND MONSTER MASKS!
PAL'S ENERGY SOURCE IS THE POWER OF JOY!
THE POWER OF JOY...?
C'MON.
YOU CAN HELP ME WITH THIS.
I CAN?
...OF COURSE YOU CAN!
トーン
TMP

CL
ASR
WAAAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!

WAAAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!
WAAAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!!!
...!
SHUFFLE
WAAAAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!
SMILE
GRIN
DASH

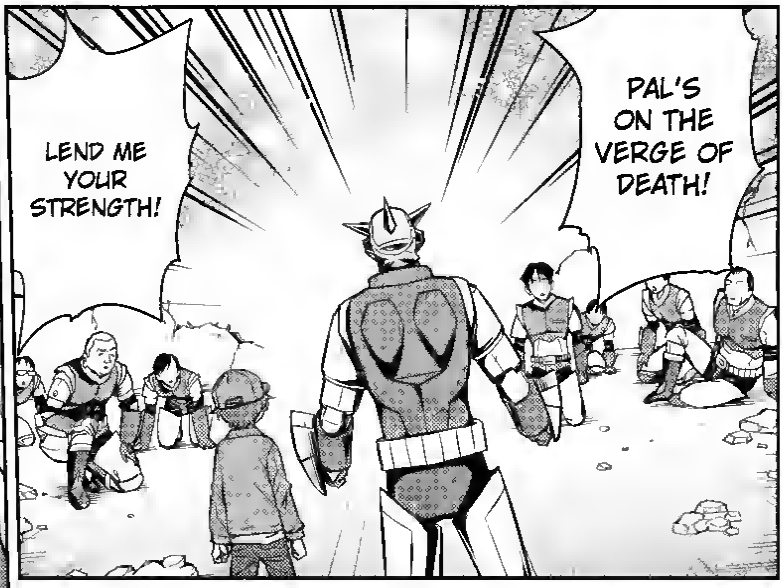
PA-SHING
WAAAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!!!

WAAAAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!


EVERY-
BODY!!!

WAAAAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!

ス・・・ッ
SHFF

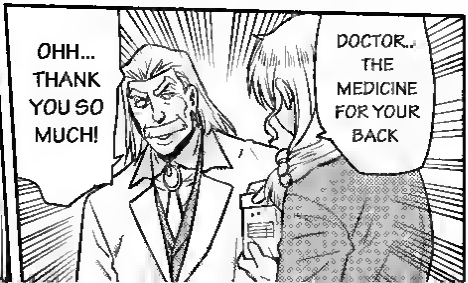

LEND ME
YOUR
STRENGTH!
PAL'S
ON THE
VERGE OF
DEATH!

WAAAH HAH HAH HAH HAH!
WHA... WAAAAH HAH HAH HAH HAH!
WAAAH HAH HAH HAH HAH!!!
MIMI-SAN. LET'S JOIN THEM.
WAAAH HAH HAH HAH HAH!!!
YES, LET'S!

WAAAAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!!!

WAAAAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH!

SHAD-
DUP!
HEH...
HA HA HA!
WHAT'S UP
WITH THAT
POSE?!

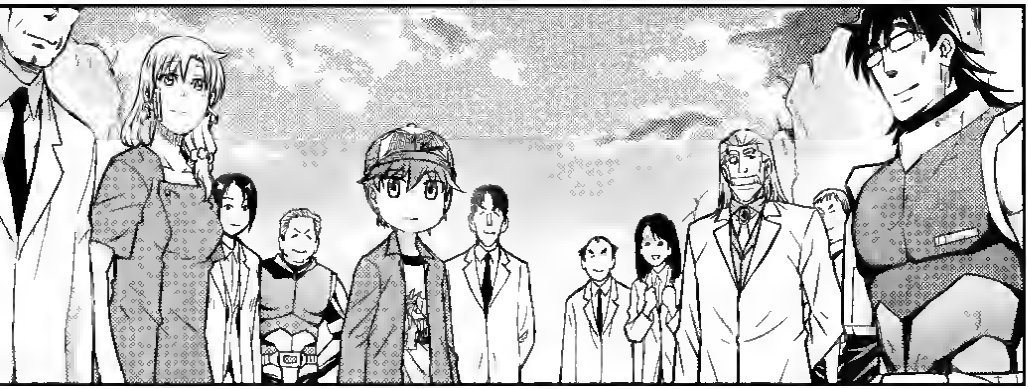

OHH...
THANK
YOU SO
MUCH!
DOCTOR..
THE
MEDICINE
FOR YOUR
BACK

WAAAH HAH HAH HAH HAH!
WAAAH HAH HAH HAH HAH!!
GLOWww
YOU OKAY?
PAL!
SWOOSH

YEAH...
IT FEELS AMAZING.
NOW!
LET'S GO BACK TO EVERYONE!

GOU.
IS PAL ALIVE?
ザワ…
MURMUR…
YEAH… HE'S RIGHT HERE!
PAL.
ワー
HURRAH!
ワー
HURRAH!
ワワワ
Wooo!
THANK GOOD-NESS!

WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT?
WHAT'LL YOU DO NOW?
THE EMPEROR IS NO MORE.
YOU'RE FREE.



I'D LIKE TO HEAR MORE OF EVERYONE'S LAUGHTER.
クスッ
GIGGLE

LET'S ALL SMILE WITH ALL WE GOT!
WE'VE ALL STRUCK DOWN HATRED!
OKAY!
WAAAAH HAH HAH HAH!
WAAAAH HAH HAH HAH HAH!!!
THE NEXT ISSUE IS OUR FINAL EPISODE!!